A SERMON CONCERNING DEATH and the RESURRECTION,

Preached in St *MARIES*, At *OXFORD*,

On *Low Sunday*, *April* the 28. 1644.

Before the COMMITTEE of the Members of the Honourable House of COMMONS.

By *W. Strode D^r of Divinity.*

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COL. 3. 3.

For ye are Dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God.

AFter the Death and Resurrection of our blessed Saviour, it will not be unseasonable, especially in these times of Danger, to meditate upon our own. Loe therefore *Life* and *Death*, not now proposed to your Choice, but to your Meditation. The matter of my Text is the whole Race of Man, both while he is, and while he is not: he still Travells, to and fro, betwixt two Stages, which are ever the same, though the order be mutually inverted. For we are no sooner enterd into Life, but we are Dead, dead and buried with Christ in Baptisme; no sooner dead to the World but new borne to God through the same meanes; when we are thus borne againe, (notwithstanding this spirituall Parenthesis,) we still proceed in a naturall course of Death; no sooner dead so, but our *Life is hid with Christ*

in God. Thus on the Corner-ſtone we ketch Corners, alive and dead, dead and alive: and 'tis quickly done: for Life and Death, or Death and Life are not ſo farre disjoyn'd as we account, none indeed ſo neare Neighbours; they are ſever'd not onely but by an Inch, as the Poet phanſied, at Sea, *Tabulâ diſtinguimur*, but on Land alſo they are ſcarce diſtant by a moment of Time: we finde them ſo cloſe united in my Text, that they meet in the ſelfe ſame Inſtant, nay further in the very nullity of Time. For now even now *Ye are Dead*, and Then even Then after Time *your Life is hid with Chriſt in God.*

So that my Text affords a contrary Aſſurance in two contrary Caſes; Aſſurance of Death while ye Live, ἀποθνήσκετε γάρ for *ye are Dead*, and Aſſurance of Life when ye Dye, for *your Life is hid with Chriſt in God*: the firſt is the *Death of Life*, the ſecond the *Life of Death*; that paſſing ſure, for ye are ſurer of nothing on Earth then of your ſelves, and yet howſoever ye are, *ye are Dead*; the ſecond ſurer yet, for God is ſurer then your ſelves, *your Life is hid with Chriſt in God.* In the firſt part I ſhall ſtrike you Dead; *ye are Dead.*

How Dead? yes already; in the *Aoriſt*; ἀπεθάνετε, which we render not, ye ſhall dye, but ye have died, or now *are dead.* Man borne of a Woman is not borne (as you may think) into Life, but into Death. Ye that are moſt awake ſit aſleep with your Eyes open; and when ye walk about, ye walk like Ghoſts. What? ſhall I tell my Hearers they are Dead? who then ſhall heare me? I know to whom I ſpeake, to the Dead, that come hither to learne the way of Life. Thrice Noble and thrice worſhipfull, thrice worthy and thrice welcome, that ye may truly know how dead ye are, I ſay, ye are thrice Dead; yes, three wayes

Dead

Dead *in Law*, Dead by the *Course of Nature*, Dead by the *Covenant of Grace*. See Tho. Bedford's Rom. 6. 7. p. 18. et seq.

First, *ye are Dead in Law*: the Generall Sentence hath already passed upon all: *In the day thou eatest of the forbidden fruit thou shalt surely dye*. From that Day to This, every sprig of *Adam* lives meerly by reprieve. For which we have nothing to pleade but our Book and Child-bearing; our Book which containes Gods mercifull Promise, and the Child-bearing of Christ, whereby we become Consanguineous with the Innocent and Holy One of God.

If so, let me turne the Inference of my Text to the Consequence, *For* to *Therefore*, and so read backward, *Therefore set not your Affections on things on the Earth*, as you are warned in the precedent verse. When we draw neare to the End, we minde nothing else, and onely thereto we set our strength. Would you not think the man mad, who being sentenced to death should be sollicitous for Titles to set forth *Hic jacet*; if being streight to be demolish'd in Person, he should seek out Surveyors to build Castles and Barnes; if being strip'd for the Axe, he should send for the Taylour; if when he should gaine Peace with God by sacrificing his Affections, he should chuse to die like *Zimri* and *Cosbi*? so vaine, so mad are we: all our toyle is for an Epitaph; we build Houses when we must dwell in the Grave; we take measure for Clothes when Death takes measure for the Coffin, we and the wormes look for Provision at once, and we dye in our Lusts. The Iudge, under whose Repreive we stand, forbids Anxiety for things that perish, yet still our wisedome teacheth us to be thus foolishly Anxious: and therefore God prevents our Projects as he did the project of that uncertaine

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rich man in the Parable: while he was driven into agony of thought what he ſhould doe with his great increaſe, while he became extreme miſerable through much proſperity, and was ready to burſt for want of a larger Store-houſe, his Repreiver ſayes unto him, *Thou Foole, this Night will I take away thy Soule*, this Night; for the Soule is alwayes due, becauſe we are Dead in Law. That which Chriſt ſpake concerning the End of the World, *Let not he that is on the houſe top come downe to take any thing out of the houſe, nor he that is in the Field returne to fetch his Clothes*, *Mat.* 24. the ſame may I apply to the End of every particular Perſon, that promiſeth Life to himſelfe for the accompliſhment of remote projects; let not he that is below thinke of cutting downe Trees to make Ladders for his advancement, nor he that ſtands above thinke of ſecuring his Condition by deſcending lower; for we are dead in Law. The Goard, wherein *Ionas* delighted, had a worme inbred to make it wither, ſo have all Earthly delights: if that will not weane us from them, we have a worme of Corruption within our ſelves to make us let goe our hold. *Abraham* the Repreſentation of all the Faithfull, had no Inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, not a Foot of his owne Perpetuity, ſave onely a place of Buriall: of this we are capable by Law. *Duſt thou art and to Duſt thou ſhalt returne.* Indeed a Grave we cannot miſſe, becauſe the Body will conſume and bury it ſelfe.

Gen. 3. 19.

2. Secondly, we are Dead by the *Courſe of Nature*. Beleeve it, ye are all dead men (as we ſay of thoſe that are deſperately ſick) for ye cannot hold out long, ye are Going while I ſpeake. Ye finde that the Duſt flyeth away: are ye not made of Duſt? that the winde vaniſheth; is not your breath in your noſtrills? that the ſhadow creepeth;

doe

doe not your Bodies cast a Shadow? as the Element such is the Compound; and as the Shadow, such is the substance, But more expresly *Dust ye are*, Psal. 103.14.v. *Your Life is a winde*, Iob.7.7.v. Your *dayes a Shadow*, Iob. 8.9.v. You see the Dust Raised, not the Rising of every Atome; the wind Past, not the Passage; the Shadow removed, not the motion; and so your dayes slide away without present observation of declining. That ye are changed ye feele, though not the changing: you perceive in your Age, a Spring, a Summer, an Autumne, a Winter, and happily severall Months of these great quarters: for every seaven-yeare brings a sensible Change: within the number of 70 yeares, (which *David* accounted a full Pitch of Life) *Solon* observed ten Changes, for ten times seven; Teeth, Youth, Beard, Ability, Wedlock, Understanding, Wisedome, Vertue, Equity, and then Recesse; these Changes we plainly discerne at the Stages, though not in the course: the Items in their summe, the granes in their Pounds we easily comprehend, but the little moments in themselves passe undiscerned, and we are stolne from our selves unawares. Sometimes *merrily*, for *we bring our yeares to an end as a Tale that is told*, Psal.90.9. sometimes *painfully*, for *our dayes are like the dayes of a Hireling*, Iob.7.1. sometimes *idly*, for our Life is σκιαὶ ὄναρ a *dreaming shadow*, halfe of it sheere sleepe; and ever we passe them *swiftly*; for *our dayes are swifter then a Weavers Shuttle*, Iob.7.6.v. and so runs our thread of Life, just so; as that from hand to hand, so this from Morning to Evening, till we come from the beginning of the Web to the Fag, from the Wombe to the Grave. Howsoever we move, still we move forward, we never stay; the present tense is but a moment, that which is past is nothing, the

Future

Future is not yet. What can we call our ſelves, who are changed before the word is pronounced? *I am* is the Name of God, the Name of the Creature is *I am not*.

We are much deceived, if we thinke we die not till the laſt Gaſpe. The beginning of Death is our Birth; we bring it with us; becauſe we bring both Fleſh, and Sin, whereof one makes us capable of Death, the other ready to earne it; and therefore as our Strength and worke increaſeth, ſo doth our wages, Death comes on the faſter from the firſt day to the laſt. We thinke ſometimes we are growne younger by Recoveries; as when we proceed from Creeping to walking, from weakeneſſe to ſtrength: 'tis not ſo; for the yeare turnes about, as well in faire weather as in foule, no leſſe in Spring then in Autumne; and as the Time ſuch is the Timed, our very growth leads to decay, all addition to Life is but an Abatement. Turne your Conceit a little from Time to Motion, you ſhall finde the Pilgrims Life ſuch as his Way, which by further progreſſe, whether up-hill or downe-hill growes ever ſhorter and ſhorter; or lay the Voyage not by Land but by Sea; in a Ship whether we ſtand or ſit, lie or goe, ſleepe or wake, play or worke, on we ſayle, till we arrive at the Port: ſo is our Life ſtill bound for Death, through all Varieties of Poſture in Reſt or Motion, through all changes of Condition by chance or purpoſe. They that tary within dores, cannot miſſe a ſignificant Embleme of their owne Fading; *All Fleſh* (ſaith the Prophet *Eſay*) *waxeth old as doth a Garment*; which whether it be worne, or folded in a Cheſt, is conſumed by degrees; and as the Cloth ſuch is the Wearer; I may adde, (ſince every thing farre and neare Preaches the ſame Lecture,) as the Houſe alſo, ſuch is the Dweller; and as the Meat, ſuch is the Eater; and

Iſa. 51. 6.

and as the Thought, such is the Thinker; in the best Condition ever vanishing: but if the Garment be neglected, the house unrepaired, the meate ill cook'd, the Thoughts destructive, if the Master too become more ruinous by Sin then by Mortality, how swift is the decay of Nature so hastened by wast, how headlong is the race of a precipice so impelled by Running?

To passe over Particulars, the whole Generation of men collected is like that of leaves, ὁποίη φύλλων γενεὴ, τοίη δ' ἀνδρῶν, the blind Poet could see so much: on a Tree still furnished, while one leafe waxeth greene another withers, while one is in the bud another drops off, and every leafe by blasting, winde, or Age, successively vanisheth: so follow the Generations of men; though the World be ever full, yet they that fill it are ever voyding the Roome; so you may see the high wayes filled with unabiding Passengers, and Channells with fleeting streames. Hom. Iliad. γ.

Is it so? then what Counsell in such a case? First, *be not over grieved for the losse of a Friend by Death*, considering that thy selfe also doest lie wounded by his side, thou dead *in Fieri* as he *in Facto*, Fish tumbling in the same Net. Thou shalt follow him, but he shall not returne to Thee; and sorrow for necessity must needes be unnecessary. use 1.

Next reckon to thy selfe *how Death invades thee*: know that every gray haire is a summons, and that every Ach, every Swelling is a Venny or Thrust made at thee, take it for a warning. Likewise cast thy account, how thou art chang'd ever since thy birth, or within a certain distance of time; then by proportion of declining, thou maiest conjecture, how near thou art to thy naturall period. But thou use 2.

must further add the *various contingence* of possible dangers; though the way be smooth, the Robbers may be rough and many; our escape from infinite Casualties, if well considered, makes every day a Birth day. This multiplicity of danger may teach us the *warier provision*, and by provision death may be stav'd off. For though we alwayes travell to it, yet our travell may be to and fro, long in passage of a little space, as the *Israelites* through frequent Meanders were travelling forty yeares from *Egypt* to *Canaan*.

After sufficient Provision, the next Caution must be against *Anxiety and Immoderate Pensiveness for more personall safety then belongs to our share*: when all the world totters, and so many eminent Worthies are dayly sacrific'd by the Sword, now to covet a particular Exemption from danger is too much partiality of tenderness. The onely meanes of security is to expect none upon Earth, but to stand armed with Patience and Resolution to indure the Lot which God hath appointed. The heart being thus setled and prepared for Death, nothing else can seem terrible, *quid ad me quàm magnis moriar, ipsum mori non est magnum.*

But the best use is, dayly *to add to our future life as much as we loose of the present*, and as fast as we perish here, so with all speed to lay the Foundations of Immortality in Heaven, selling both profit and pleasure for one inestimable Iewell, and making friends of the *unrighteous Mammon*. Since die we must, let us learne betimes how to die; that we may turne our necessity into Vertue, and meet our Destiny not in Horrour, but in Honour; not as a Losse, but as an Advantage; not as a Trapdore swallowing up in Destruction, but as a Gate opening to everlasting Life.

And

And this is done, first by *recounting our lasser dayes in bitternesse*, so shall we unlive the time we have lived amisse; then by *frequent Meditation and foretast of Death*. Think thine Eyes grown dim in the fainting twylight of life, and thou shalt soon turn them aside from vanity; think thine Eares grown deafe with sickneſſe, and thou wilt soon stop them against Idle words; think thy Tongue grown stiffe with drowth, and that thought will be a watch before thy mouth, to Examine what thou letteſt out and what thou letteſt in; think on the cold ſweat of Death, ſo thou wilt abhorre to ſwim in Luſt; think how naked thou muſt goe hence, even as bare as thou cameſt, onely with a ſhrowd as thou cameſt in with a Cawle, and almoſt with as little fleſh, then thou wilt eaſily contemne all wordly pomp, and ſubdue thy carnall Tumours. Thinkeſt thou, that Death drawes nearer when it is thought of, or dares not to approach unleſſe it be call'd? no ſuch matter: this practice of dying dayly will not make us to die the *ſooner*, but ſo to live as that we may die the *happier*. And this or the like practice belongs to our Chriſtian Profeſſion aſſumed in Baptiſme, where by the *Covenant of Grace* we become Dead in a third Acception. 3.

Dead in Quality, Dead to all Wordly and Carnall Luſts; though we may ſometimes fall upon them by Infirmity, yet to purſue them is againſt our Profeſſion. The Deſire is Dead, and the Renunciation made againſt them is a kind of Death. The ſpirituall *Pharaoh* with all his Hoaſt lies drown'd in the Font, repreſenting a Red Sea, the Blood of *Chriſt*: there Chriſt and We enter into Covenant, he to free us from Sin, and we to forſake it; he to ſtrike off the Dominion and Guilt thereof, we the Service and Confederation. Becauſe by nature we are born Dead

in Sin, and ſubject to Corruption, therefore by a ſecond birth we are born Dead unto Sin, the ſpirituall Death is a Countermine againſt the Naturall. For by the Power of Baptiſme the Old man together with his Luſts is taken and crucified, nayl'd hand and foot to the Croſſe of our Saviour, quite diſabled from acting what he would, and at length with much adoe, with ſtriving and ſtrugling, with Gall and Vineger, with Piercing or Breaking forc'd to die outright.

How then ſhall we that are Dead to Sin live any longer therein? 'tis the Uſe of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 6. 2 *v.* Is it not ſtrange to heare that a dead man walkes? is it not ſtranger to heare that he ſpeakes and workes, yes eates and drinkes abundantly, and yet dead? how is it then that the Old man ſo long ſince crucified, dead, and buried, doth yet ſo frequently exerciſe the Actions of Life, moving the Tongue to Idle words, Lying, & Swearing, the Throat to Exceſſe, the Eie to Adultery, the Hands to Oppreſſion, and all the members to ſeverall Iniquity! how is it that the Church of God is haunted with ſuch Evill Spirits and Goblins! ſure there is ſome Spell or Magick in this foule Prodigie; otherwiſe without the help of the Devill it could not be. I grant, that a rotten Tree after it is hewn down and laid in the Durt, may put forth a Sprig, a Leafe, or ſo; but they come to no Strength, they never proſper. Haire may grow on a Carcaſſe, but ſuch haire is never dreſſed nor keemed. So may the Reliques of the Old man have a Counterfeit ſhew of Life, but muſt not gather Head, never be cheriſh'd within any Chriſtian boſome. Death frees us from all worldly Relations, and Bonds (as S. *Paul* diſputes in the ſixth to the *Romanes*) it frees the Wife from the yoake of her Husband, the Servant from the Task of his Maſter:

ſhall

ſhall we then who are freed by Death forſake a freſh and lovely Spouſe who died for our Love, and be reunited to an old rotten Carcaſſe? ſhall we forgoe this new Maſter who bought us with his blood, for an Old tyrannous Canniball that feedes on our deſtruction? God forbid.

So much for this point; wherein you have heard, that we are now dead already, and in three reſpects: Dead in Law, through the ſentence pronounced on ſin, that therefore we ought not to be over-ſollicitous for much proviſion where we have no right to tarry longer. Dead by the Courſe of Nature, as appeares by the mutability of thoſe elements whereof we conſiſt, and of things appertaining; by dayly declynations, inſenſibly but yet continually growing into ſenſible changes, in our owne Perſons, and by the ſucceſſive deſluction of all mankinde: from whence we ſhould gather patience for the loſſe of others, Caution for our ſelves, but without Anxiety, and above all godly Preparation for a better life. Laſtly, that we are Dead by the Covenant of Grace, Dead to ſin, and ſin to us, that therefore ſin ought not to rule and exerciſe our Members. Then if the Old *Adam* Die within us while we live, we ſhall live in the New when we Dye; as we were Buried in Baptiſme, we ſhall be Baptized in Buriall, and returne with Bodies as clean from the Grave as we did with ſoules from the Font. So from the *Death of life* I paſſe to my ſecond Generall, the *Life of death. Your Life is hid with Chriſt in God.*

Death having loſt her ſting cannot kill us utterly; ſome Life is left, elſe it could not be hid. You may then obſerve theſe three degrees of Comfort; the *ſafety* of life in the Chamber of Death, *'tis Hid*; the ready *Meanes* of ſafety, *'tis hid with Chriſt*; the ſtrong *Author* of the Meanes, *'tis*

hid with Christ in God. The Subject is aptly disposed to a resurrection, the Meanes are already prepar'd, the Author is All-sufficient and Infallible.

First, our *Life is Hid.* then it is *not quite extinguished,* but *safe laid,* as coales rak'd up in Ashes, safe though unseen, alive though close covered. It lies like Treasure under Ground, not out of Minde, though out of Sight, and shall again be dig'd up, if not for the worth of the Mettle, yet for the Image of God which it beares.

Death is but a longer and sounder sleep, and life is hid in sleep, as well as in Death; for in sleep the senses are fetterd, as in Death all bodily Faculties. Howsoever from the Captivity of one part an utter Destruction of the whole is not concluded. When halfe the body is struck and possessed by a dead palsie, there still remaines a living Body, because there is life in some part. So when the whole Body is seazd by Death, there still remaines a living Man, because there is life in the best part, the Soule. *Abraham, Isaack,* and *Jacob* have being enough to preserve their Names, and our Saviour proves them to be also Living. What though the Union of parts be Actually dissolved? Yet the Dissolution is not Totall, because there still remaines a possibility and a Naturall Desire of reuniting. The parts which stand separate are in want and Imperfect, as without the whole they needes must; therefore the widowed Soule longs for the Bodies Fellowship, to supply this want, and to gaine the fullnesse of Perfection: *How long* (cry the Saints under the Altar) *O Lord Holy and True, how long? Rev.6.9.v:* This Naturall Desire cannot ever be frustrated. So then upon the matter, the Dead are but asleepe; and *if they sleepe,* then (as the Apostles well answered) *they shall doe well:* for as men, that have slep'd soundly, arise

arise from their Couch more fresh and lively, the dull and cumbersome humours being well concocted, so the dead rouſed with a loud ſummons from the Grave, will appeare more Glorious and Agil, all Imperfections being worne off by the Furnace of Corruption. In the meane time, while the Bodies of both Sleepers lie ſenſeleſſe, their Soules are alike buſied; as in the living ſleepe they are taken up with dreames, ſo in the dead ſleepe with heavenly Viſions.

But ſhall we call it a Sleeping or Hiding, when the Body is turn'd to the ſubſtance of the Bed, Fleſh to Mold? ſtill we may. For what think you of the Seedes ſown in your Ground? is that ſowing a deſtruction, or onely a Hiding? ſay then, doth our Creed, in this point extend to our Corne, and not to our ſelves? Behold in a little ſeed there ſleepes the bulk of a riſing Tree: when 'tis grown to a vaſt extent, conſider in what ſecret crany ſo ſpacious vertue lodg'd: where was the ruggednesſe of the bark, the ſolidity of the trunk, the verdure of the Leafe, the pleaſantneſſe of the fruit? feele and examine the Seed, 'tis not rough, whence this grate of the bark? 'tis not tough, whence in proceſſe this hardneſſe of the wood? 'tis not greene, whence this tincture of leaves? it ſmells not, whence this fragrance in the fruit? wherefore in Secrecy they all at once lay dormant, though at once they doe not break forth. From the Seed is the Root produced, from the Root the Trunk and bark, from them the Twig, from the Twig the Leaves and Fruit, and againe from the Fruit the Seed. Now man like Seed lies reſuſcitable in the womb of the Earth: If from a ſmall kernell having no diſtinction of parts, wood, bark, leaves and fruit be dayly raiſed into the maſſy bulk of a Tree, what more wonder,

if our

if out of dry Homogeneous Duſt, Bones, Sinewes, Veynes, Fleſh, Skin, and Hayre, be reduced into Man. He that askes a Reaſon of the manner, muſt be cunningly anſwered by asking other queſtions, of things continually obvious to ſight, yet no way comprehended by Reaſon; that ſince by ſeeing we cannot penetrate the depth of things *Viſible*, we may beleeve by hearing the Truth of the *Inviſible*. So S. *Gregory* on the twentieth of S. *Johns Goſpell*. The Philoſopher may object, that the raiſing of a Tree out of Seed is rather a Reparation of kind then of the particular, and ſo an Inſtance of Generation rather then of the Reſurrection; but ſince this Generation is from the womb of the Earth, not from the Stock of the Tree, we reply that it is alſo an Argument of the Reſurrection, ſo urged both by *our Saviour* and by S. *Paul*.

And to make this Doctrine more familiar, the Steps of the Reſurrection are imprinted in moſt of the Creatures. The Phœnix waxing old fills her Neſt with billets of Spice, on her funerall pile ſhe turnes into Aſhes, and after by the dew of Heaven ſprings up a new Phœnix. Divers imperfect bodies, which yeſterday lay labouring in ſome deep puddle, now ſtart into Life; Bees in the Hive, Flies in the Clefts of Walls, which lay all winter without ſenſe or motion, ſuddenly revive at the Suns approach. Day it ſelfe dies into night, and the life of the Sun is hid with the Antipodes, yet within a few houres he appeares in his ſparkling dreſſe, to cheere the forſaken world. All things are preſerved by periſhing, and are new trim'd by Diſſolution. So *Tertullian*. Though theſe Arguments ſeeme meerly Rhetoricall, and farre ſhort of demonſtrating the Reſurrection of man; yet upon better conſideration, ſince they plainly demonſtrate an Aptitude of Reviction

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in nature, under the power and providence of the Author, from the raising of these inferiour Creatures, we may confidently conclude, a proportionall likelyhood of raising that, which beares his own Image.

Wherefore I returne to the meditation of Nature, whose reparation is most apparant at this present season: behold now the Revolution of the whole world is an earnest of mans Restitution; now all the Emblems of mortality enjoy their spring; Grasse and Flowers rise from the sullen clod, under which their life lay hid. Shall we borrow their names onely in time Fading, and not when they flourish? Why so? for all these things are renew'd for man, and man doubteth not of their renewing: shall he for whom they are reviv'd, dispaire of his owne Resurrection? What though he lye long, and wast in the earth? so he ought. Creatures, that soon fade againe, may have quick returnes of their spring, but man, who after his rising is sure to wake for ever, may well endure a long sleep. Again, Creatures lesse Noble, unlesse they spring quickly, cannot spring at all; but man consisting of a reasonable soule, and indued with vegetant power in the most Excellent manner, is ripened more Deliberately, (saith *Athenagoras*) and must rise the last of all; he hath a Priviledge to rise after many thousands of yeares, out of any Elements, Fire, Ayre, Sea, and Earth, wheresoever he hath been scatterd. Nothing springs before the due time, at the due time Man shall also: Would you have the Harvest before all the graine be sown? *Mundi tempora homini Annus est*, the end of the world is mans Harvest; and best of all so, least again he should rise to sin: but when men have been all sown, when the Winter of dying is past, when God the husbandman hath sufficiently purged us, and clarified the Flesh from drosse, he will call us up to an endlesse Summer; a Summer answerable to the past Winter. For which purpose, we also have our peculiar Sun, and proper Dew; Sun and Dew as

B. of Bath and Wells p. 73. &c.

 well

well as the Creatures: our Sun is the *Sun of Righteousneſſe, when He appeares, then* (as it followes after my Text) *we ſhall appeare together with him in glory:* our Dew, whether it be the *Dew of Teares*, it uſhers in the *Reaping of Ioy*, or whether the *Dew of God's promiſe*, it ſhall not faile of *performance. Awake and ſing* (ſaith he) *Ye that dwell in the duſt, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs; and the earth ſhall caſt out her Dead, Eſay. 26. 19. v.* When this comes to paſſe (as who dares doubt it?) then it ſhall appeare, that we lay as *Flos in Hyeme*, that we Winter'd in Chriſt our Cauſe, and only ſunk into his Root, who is the *true Vine*, and *Tree of Life*. This is our ſecond degree of Comfort, that our *Life is hid with Chriſt.*

With Chriſt, he is the Meanes: under the power of his Reſurrection our life is hid. Shall not he be able to effect for us, what the Sun can doe for Flowers? ſome will ask, *How ſhall the Dead riſe, or with what body ſhall they come?* Chriſt anſwers; *With my dead Body ſhall they riſe, Eſay. 26.* at the *19. v.* By vertue of his body already riſen from Death. *Vbi gloriæ præceſſit Capitis, eò ſequetur & ſpes Corporis,* (ſaith *Leo*) whither the Head hath glorioufly gone before, the Members hope to follow after.

At the firſt veiw there appeares no more in Chriſts Reſurrection, but a man Riſen; but when we conſider the Condition and Relation of that Man; that being the *Innocent and Holy one of God*, he was neither *worthy of Death*, nor *Tenable* by it, that therefore he dyed not for *Himſelfe*, but for the *Guilty*, not as an *Offendor*, but *Vndertaker*, and *Laid downe his Life with Power to take it up again*, for the benefit of thoſe for whom he laid it downe; that Death unadviſedly ſeizing upon an unlawfull prize, forfeited the Lawfull hold of ſinners together with the Iuſt; when the Goſpell hath yeilded this Diſcovery, then we find that this Sonne of Man is become the Everlaſting Father, the Lord and giver of Life to all Mankinde; that our Reſurrection

ſurrection is virtually included under His; and that through power thereof, we ſhall riſe as ſurely, as if we had his power to raiſe our ſelves. For as *to us a Childe was borne*, and for *us a Man was Crucified*, ſo for *us a Saviour is riſen*. Whatſoever Chriſt did on Earth, the ſame he did in our behoofe, not for Himſelfe, ſo that if we riſe not, in vaine is Chriſt riſen. Why is he cal'd the *Foundation*, the *Head*, the *Roote*, the *Firſt fruites*, but in relation to *Us*? If the Foundation be laid by wiſedom, it implies a riſing Structure, if the Head be above Water, the Members are ſafe, if the Roote be quick, the Branches will ſproute, if the firſt Fruites be Holy, ſo is the whole Crop.

Chriſt is our Life (in the next words after my Text) this Life lay *Hid in our Grave*, and therefore it is but a correſpondent exchange, that *our Life ſhould be hid with Chriſt*; that ſince he lay in a ſepulcher hewd out for another, others ſhould be quicken'd by his Riſing. But how was Chriſt hid in our Grave? himſelfe hath ſhew'd in the 12. of S^t. *Iohn*, 24. *v. Except a Corne of Wheat fall into the Ground and dye, it abideth alone, but if it dye, it bringeth forth much fruite*; he lay then in the Grave as a graine of Wheat in the furrow, ſo purpoſely ſowne for us, that our Life might be hid with him, as increaſe in the Graine which was ſown. It is not to be forgotten, that as Chriſt at his Paſſion compar'd Himſelfe to a *Graine of Wheat*, ſo the Apoſtle in his Reſurrection hath fitly compar'd him *to the Firſt Fruites*. 1. *Cor.* 15. 20. the compleat Allegory declares this Vertue in Him, this Dependance in us; that ſince he lay in the Ground not like a ſtone, but like Corne, therefore in ſpringing up he roſe not ſingle, not as *Ionas* from the belly of the Whale, (unleſſe to *Ionas* you reckon the *Ninivites* raiſ'd by his Preaching) but multiplyed to more then Fifties, to more then Hundreds, to a world of Graines beſides Himſelfe: that ſince at His Reſurrection he likewiſe became the firſt Fruites of them that ſleep, he hath conſequently obtain'd a bleſſing for the whole field.

Wherefore as the Lord *Iesus* (who is blessed for evermore) hath return'd Victor in spite of invading Death, and all Impediments wherewith he was blocked, so shall it be, that all his Dependants in the utmost skirts of the world shall rise from Death, notwithstanding the drowning, burning, mangling, confounding, scattering of Carcasses, whose disorderd destiny makes a distinct Recollection of Parts to seem impossible. But in presence of a sufficient meanes, and unresistible Power, Impossibility must Vanish. We finde in the Generall Course of Nature, things as much beyond our reach dayly renew'd; we finde in Humane nature no Reluctance, no repugnance against the Resurrection, but rather an Aptitude and desire, if there come a sufficient cause to reduce it into Act. Now when Christian Religion hath discovered to Reason an able Meanes in Christ, who for this purpose became the first fruites of them that slep'd, and hath gotten power to be judge of the Quick and Dead, that the Dead might rise and appeare before his Tribunall; now the Resurrection is more then possible, more then feasible, 'tis in Vertue already perform'd; and when I shall shew you that the *Author*, who hath chosen and appoynted this meanes, is God, it will be found to be necessary. And herein consists the third degree of comfort, *our Life is Hid with Christ in God.*

In God. Where could our Life be better or safer plac'd? For as the Soule is the Life of the Body, so God is the Life of our Soules, and consequently both Soules and Bodies are in his hand; hardly to be poynted out, but safe kept in an Invincible and Infallible Custody. The same who of his Infinite goodnesse hath appointed Christ to be the meanes of our Resurrection, he having Power and will to produce the deserv'd Effect, will not faile of his Iustice and Truth to bring it to passe. If yet you can doubt, consider your own Creatures, the works of man: when a musicall Ayre hath been plaid, is it quite lost,

never

never to be called for againe? or what is become of it? is it hid in the Bowells of the Instrument, in the prick'd or conceivd Copy, or in the hand and Power of the Musition? in all these? so when the breath of man is expired, he is hid in the *Mold* as in the *Matter*, with *Christ* as with our *Idea* and Pattern, in *God* as in the *Author* and harmonious Composer. Againe, when a Printer dissolves his Impression, and casts it into the first Elements or Letters, is it quite lost, or what is become of it? is it hid in the Boxes which contain those Letters, or in the book out of which it was copied, or in the hand of the Printer that sets the Letters together? in all these? such is the Case of Man: though all his quarters be divided into the quarters of the world, though his parts be distributed like those of the *Levites* wife, or digested into other bodies, or scattered into all Elements, they are still within Gods Boxes, though his Figure be lost to the memory of men, it remaines fresh with Christ, and *in his Book are all our Members written*; though they cannot meet of themselves, yet God can finde them out, and will joyne them together after his Sonnes likenesse, and his particular Register. Who turned the round world, who fashioned the parts of man at first? was not God that Carpenter, and Christ his Sonne? Now which is harder, to make a Table and the Timber too, or to joyne the parts taken asunder? to create that which was not, or to new cast that which was before? That Potentiall being, which man had within the hand of his Maker before his Creation, the same, and more, remaines after his Dissolution. Look on Nature, the Creature is potentially couch'd under her Power in the Seed; look on Art, so is the frame within the Artificers call in the wood; look up to God, so are they that shall rise, within the Mold, before him: how grosse is it to beleeve *Nature* in her Naturall Effects, *Art* in her Artificiall, and onely to mistrust *God* in his workes Divine? Ask not, how the Bodies confounded one

with another ſhall be ſifted and ſever'd; for God is the Keeper of Bodies and Elements, he knowes where every Atome lies, what belongs properly to every Perſon, and how to call it forth. How vaine is it, to queſtion Gods Power in things impoſſible to our ſcant Apprehenſion? yet to widen your Apprehenſion in this particular, and to ſhew you an Anſwer to more then ever was objected, Though all adventitious matter ſhould be ſeparated, and none ſhould remaine but that which iſſued from the loynes of our Parents, and was alſo derived from our firſt Parents *Adam* and *Eve*, God out of thoſe few drops could raiſe diſtinct and proper bodies to all mankind.

Nihil Deo Impoſſibile niſi quod non vult, (ſaith *Tertullian*) nothing is Impoſſible to God but what he will not doe, and what he will that's neceſſary. Now God hath reveal'd his will by appointing and uſing the *meanes of Raiſing us*, and hath paſt his promiſe by his Son *Ieſus*; that through him he will raiſe us up at the laſt day. *This is the Fathers will which hath ſent me* (ſaith our Saviour) *that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up againe at the laſt day, Ioh. 6. 39. v.* ſo that now Gods Iuſtice and Truth are deeply at ſtake, till there come a Reſurrection. His Iuſtice would have ſtood ingag'd however, though no ſuch meanes, no ſuch promiſe had been reveal'd; if we grant, there is a God, it may be evinc'd out of morall principles, that of neceſſity there muſt be a Reſurrection, though we knew not how: for either there would be no difference of Vertue and Vice in reſpect of Reward and Puniſhment, and ſo divine Iuſtice would be but a Bug-beare, or elſe there would be need of a Reſurrection, that they who have been proſperous in their wickedneſſe might be called to account hereafter, and they that have here ſuffered by Vertue might then ſhine in Glory. But ſince the meanes are expreſſely revealed, ſince Chriſt hath paid the price of our Reſurrection, and God hath promiſed to make it good, ſince many Martyrs have

have died in defence of this Hope, upon Gods word, God is further ingag'd both to Christ and Them, both in his *Iustice* and *Truth*, to performe his purpose and promise. And we may be sooner induc'd, to yeeld, that there is no *God*, or that he was not at all our *Builder*, nor Christ his *Cornerstone*, then that *he should begin to build and not make an End*, or *Promise* an End and not *fulfill* it. Wherefore without doubting, let us here rest our Hope, that as the Glory of the Father hath raised his Sonne, so he will perfect his Glory in raising his Sonnes Attendants.

Thus you have heard the three Degrees of our Comfort; the *Safety* of Life in Death, in *that it is hid*; the sure *meanes* of safety for that it is *hid with Christ*; and the strong *Author* of the meanes, in that it is *hid with Christ in God*.

It remaines now on our part, that we be not affrighted with Death, because it is no longer the Iaw of Destruction, but the Gate of Life, and a Passage into Everlasting Happinesse. * If those bold Spirits, that having heard of the Immortality of the Soule, or at least her Rest from misery, presently dispatched themselves out of this World, without any other call, or further warrant, but onely this Notion; if those undaunted Venturers had been likewise taught the Resurrection of the Body to a better Life, and had such an occasion to spend their lives, as is now offer'd to us, the defence of Religion, Lawes, and Liberties; doubtlesse their Courage had been so inflam'd, that either through too much Valour they would undeservedly have found their seeking, or have gotten such honour, as might stay the desire of death by pursuing the death of others, and by taking content in Acts of Glory. I doe not wish any to run this Course unadvisedly; a sober Expectation of Death or Victory, in usefull Service, both by charging and sustaining, is Valour sufficient, and not too much, for any Souldierly Martyr.

* Cic. de Contemn. morte.

Further

Further since Christ by the wood of his Cross hath sweetned our bitter waters, and died for Sin to make Death easie, since he hath risen againe to lead us the way into Life Eternall, I cannot too much inculcate this other Lesson, that we walk not disorderly in this our Pilgrimage; least we turn the Gift of Life into double Death, the Joy of our Hearts into Horror and Judgement, our Rising into Bottomlesse Falling. In it selfe, nothing can be so sweet and desireable as the Appearance of the Lord Iesus in the Resurrection. Why should we so confound the Conscience with unrepented Guiltinesse, that we should need Mountaines to cover us from his Presence? Let us rather amend our wayes, and live carefully, that we may die with Comfort and Rise with Joy, that the Hope of a Joyfull Rising may remaine comfortably seal'd unto us in the time of our Hiding, by Assurance of the Holy Ghost, through Christ the Meanes; and God the Author. To whom be all Thankes, Praise, Dominion, and Glory, now and for evermore.

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